

Summer 2002

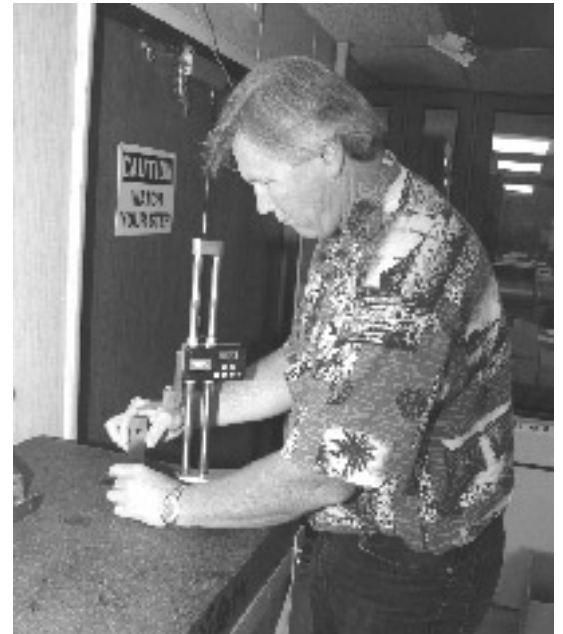
It's Tool Time at PIA's Engineering Unit

Staff Gears Up to Gauge the Skill of Inmate Metal Workers

PIA's Engineering Unit has put the finishing touches on the Machining Inspection Center which will be utilized to test parts made by inmates at PIA metal enterprises. The testing is part of the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certification requirement to assure that machined parts meet industry standards. It is the latest addition to PIA's Inmate Employability Program's (IEP) ongoing efforts to enhance the employability of inmates upon parole with professional credential opportunities.

The inspection center, located in the Engineering Unit at Central Office, is operated under the direction of Joey Franco, Prison Industries Engineer, who is pleased his unit will be assisting IEP and sees it as an appropriate partnership. "We are happy to support the Inmate Employability Program. Being that we're engineering and familiar with blueprints and machine tolerances, we can easily check and test these parts."

Engineering staff at Central Office will function as a MET-TEC, or Metalworking Technical Committee. The plan calls for an inmate manufactured



Dwight Smedley measures a part made by a PIA inmate.



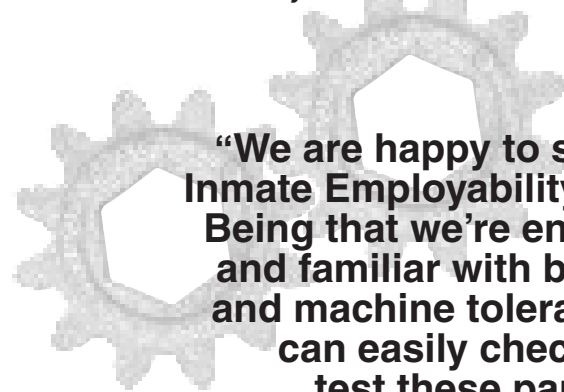
Bill Conforti demonstrates how parts are tested.

part to be submitted for testing, resulting in either an "accept" or "reject" score. If the part passes, the inmate can then move on to a written examination and ultimately a NIMS credential.

"We met with NIMS and discussed who would do this and determined Product Design and Development right here at PIA was the most appropriate organization to handle these responsibilities," said Mike Colwell, Inmate Employability Program Manager. "They want to help and are very qualified and well-positioned to validate that parts made by PIA inmates meet NIMS specifications."

"With a NIMS credential an inmate can go into any metal shop in the country upon parole and be employable. Passing these tests show genuine professional skill."

The inspection center features an array of precision measuring instruments such as micrometers, calipers and height-gauges. Parts tested will include shafts, bushings, spindles and other machined parts.



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**Joey Franco, Chief,
Engineering Unit**



Joey Franco sets up an area in the Engineering Unit to test metal parts for NIMS Credentialing.